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ABSTRACT

Following a review of needs assessment definitions, it is concluded that needs may be practically defined as the difference between what is and what ought to be. In order to analyze this difference, particularly in regard to job market openings in comparison to occupational curricular offerings and enrollment, a computerized model was established for a consortium of Florida community colleges utilizing currently collected information from the best of available sources. The nucleus of the model is derived from and focused on a single source--that of Job Bank data maintained by the Florida Employment Security Agency. The model described in this report is capable of answering such questions as: What are area job needs and their associated training requirements? Are there major gaps and shortages among jobs in our communities? Are our educational programs meeting the needs for special skills? What are the educational and economic trends in the community? What will be the economic balance given the present trends? Answers to such questions can aid in policy-making intended to reduce imbalances and to responsibly address determined and projected future needs. Curriculum planning can then be based on the future needs of the community. Overall, the model is intended to be useful in providing information to be applied in reducing the deleterious imbalances between what is and what ought to be. (JDS)

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NEEDS ASSESSMENT: IMPORTANCE IN PLANNING, PRESENT STATUS

by Herbert E. Phillips

Among the present "in" terms of our educational jargon is "needs assessment." It creeps into every session, it appears in nearly all articles having to do with education. What is even more significant it is now becoming part of federal and state laws, regulations, and/or guidelines. No longer can we undertake any action unless it is based upon an "assessment of needs." Needs Assessment is no longer being suggested, it is being mandated! Yet, never has there been a term so universally accepted with so little known about it, with so little written about it! The study by Dr. Belle Ruth Witkin, of Alemeda County, California, called "An Analysis of Needs Assessment Techniques for Educational Planning"[1] is the single greatest source of definitive information.

Precisely, what is a "need"? Dr. G. William Porter,[2] who recently reviewed the literature, agrees that few seem to have attempted to define the term. The usual reply to the question is, "Oh, you know!" Probably Roger Kaufman[3] came closest when he said that it is the discrepancy between what is and what should be.

If that is to be accepted as the definition then there are four distinct steps to be taken: (1) determine what should be, (2) define present conditions (what is), (3) determine which of the needs are the college's responsibilities, (4) prioritize those needs for which the college is responsible. In other words, determine critical needs. A critical need, by my definition, is one which gets into the budget. The third step can be taken only if the goals and objectives of the college are clearly understood and

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generally agreed to--only if the objectives of the institution are precisely defined.

A college should already have carried out this important task before the first needs assessment is made.

This can be done in one of several ways: totally "in-house," by an outside agency such as ETS or Battelle, or from data gathered for a state department determination. This third way, of course, would use only the data pertaining to a particular college. Brevard Community College used ETS Institutional Goals Inventory. Lake City utilized data from a state-wide survey employing the Delphi technique, as many do.

Now how is the assessment of needs to be carried out? The most popular methods have been community meetings, public opinion polls, questionnaires, interviews, and various kinds of surveys. A more sophisticated method utilizes the critical incident technique. If only occupational needs are being assessed, newspaper ads and commercial employment agencies' openings are sources often used. In fact, the Central Florida Consortium tried and abandoned these as sources.

Another factor to be considered is who is to furnish the data? The population sampled certainly will determine to a large extent the needs which emerge. Although extensive involvement may be desirable from a public relations standpoint not many people are knowledgeable enough to make intelligent contributions. Both availability and reliability of data must be considered.

Taking all factors into account it would appear that from the bases of magnitude, availability, and reliability the best information would be the voluminous data accumulated by governmental agencies.

North Carolina State University thru a federal project called ED NEEDS[4] tried to find out how these data were being used by educational planners. It was found that it not only is it not being used very extensively, most educators don't even know what is available.

Unfortunately, there have been too many instances when a needs assessment has become the objective in and of itself. The president desires to appear progressive; he wants the faculty to see that he is really an educational leader; or the guidelines for a proposal specify a needs assessment. I always have and always will contend that a determination of needs is just a part of a larger process called "good planning."

According to Kern Alexander,[5] of the University of Florida, there are four generally accepted approaches to educational planning:

1. the cost-benefit approach
2. man-power forecasting
3. social demand approach
4. social objectives approach

Each has its place. Each has its shortcomings.

Cost-benefit is an expression of how supply and demand are related. Rate of returns analysis does not provide any goals for supply and demand. It gives indicators of desirable "directions of change."[6]

It does not take into account the fact that different input-output combinations will probably ultimately depend on relative prices and productivity.[7]

Alexander says,[8] "Over-all cost benefit analyses, designation of costs and benefits by program and level of education, and

internal cost-efficient analyses are all important to a balanced educational planning system." Cost-benefit analyses should also be made for the student--how long will it take to get his money back?

The man-power forecasting approach doesn't analyze costs and benefits. It forecasts future demands in view of needs estimated from economic growth forecasts. Alone, it isn't effective because past practices can't accurately forecast future needs. Blaug[9] asks for "manpower forecasting with a difference." In-out migration and changed economic conditions are very difficult to relate to these forecasts.

Social demand tells us very little except what occupational programs will probably attract students. On the basis of enrollment figures, past experience, drop-out rates, interest surveys, and other highly unreliable figures we make a "guestimate" of what we'll enroll if we have the program.

Mostly this method is one of re-action rather than action.

Social objectives approach depends on creating demand for programs.

Alexander is of the opinion that "The answer to the planning dilemma is to employ all four approaches to increase the reliability of educational planning."[10]

There are nearly as many methods as there are approved federal projects, but the method of needs assessment described by Dr. Katie Tucker contains many aspects of the four approaches to planning. It uses available current local government data (job bank openings) to determine what the occupational needs are at the moment. It compares these needs with the current college capabilities (programs,

enrollments, trained manpower available). It prioritizes these needs according to the particular situation in the area. Then the decision maker determines how critical a need is by budgeting or not budgeting for it--the acid test of criticality.

In 1972 the Central Florida Needs Assessment Consortium was formed. It consists of Central Florida, Lake City, Brevard, Florida Junior College at Jacksonville, St. Johns River, Florida Keys, and Valencia. The University of Florida and Florida State University are assisting agencies.

Until this October this consortium has been financed by Title III of the Higher Education Act. It now operates under contract from C.E.T.A. to furnish data to Florida's 10 planning districts. In the four years of our existence we have had experience with goals inventories, questionnaires, using newspaper ads, commercial agencies' openings, community awareness surveys, and most of the popular aspects of needs determination. The group decided that the method described hereafter best fits our needs. It was then field tested on our largest college, F.J.C. at Jacksonville.

Dr. Katie Tucker, a product of Chipola Junior College, Southern Mississippi, and Florida State University was engaged as the executive director. Although she is now employed by the Floria State Department of Commerce, she still guides our group.

Dr. Tucker describes the below program as it has developed and and now functions.

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[1] Witkin, Belle Ruth. An Analysis of Needs Assessment Techniques for Educational Planning at State, Intermediate, and District Levels, Hayward, California, May 1975.

[2] Porter, G. William. An Inductive Method of Health Education Needs Assessment, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, 1975, pp. 15-16.

[3] Kaufman, Roger A. Educational System Planning, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972.

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[5] Alexander, Kern. "Education as an Investment in State and Individual," Unpublished paper, October 6, 1975, p. 56.

[6] Woodhall, Maureen. Economic Aspects of Education, National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales, Windsor, England, 1972, p. 75.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Opus cit., p. 59.

[9] Blaug, Mark. "Approaches to Educational Planning," Educational Journal, June 1967, pp. 262-287.

[10] Op. cit., p. 62.

By: Dr. Katie Tucker, Presentor
Symposium II

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND LONG-RANGE PLANNING

We are living in crucial times for our United States. Prosperity--the theme your generation and my generation has enjoyed--is changing into a recessive state. The concept of plenty, over-abundance, open-ended resources, and the prosperity way of life for the overwhelming majority is coming to a halt. For many that were among the prospering employed that are now unemployed, prosperity has come to a screeching halt. As of 1975, the national figures for unemployment are reaching such dimensions that they are being compared with the trends of the 30s, and an over-supply of workers are indicated in many work areas.

Many economic overtones can be obtained from an in-depth look at these data. Many national policy decisions are being made on the future of our country as well. And most of these decisions impact on education at every level--but especially at the career preparation level and those institutions concerned with the training of the people for tomorrow's jobs. Education: did the educational training that has transpired over the bicentennial years in America influence the state of our country? Has education impacted the economy as it has evolved in any significant way? Did it matter that education did not begin with an assessment of what needed to be taught, or with any long-range plans? Is any type of education better than no education?

The Central Florida Consortium was brought together to accomplish the Needs Assessment Project--a national pilot effort to

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determine what educational needs were paramount in the communities. The Community College Consortium has developed a model that can be useful to any college concerned with manpower training to meet the needs for tomorrow's economy. The Needs Assessment Model also aids two other groups directly concerned with curriculum planning: the educational decision-maker and the individual that will be taking the educational program for his future job preparation.

The model works on the principal that data already being collected on a continuous basis is far superior to the development of an in-house (or college data collection section), new survey procedure.

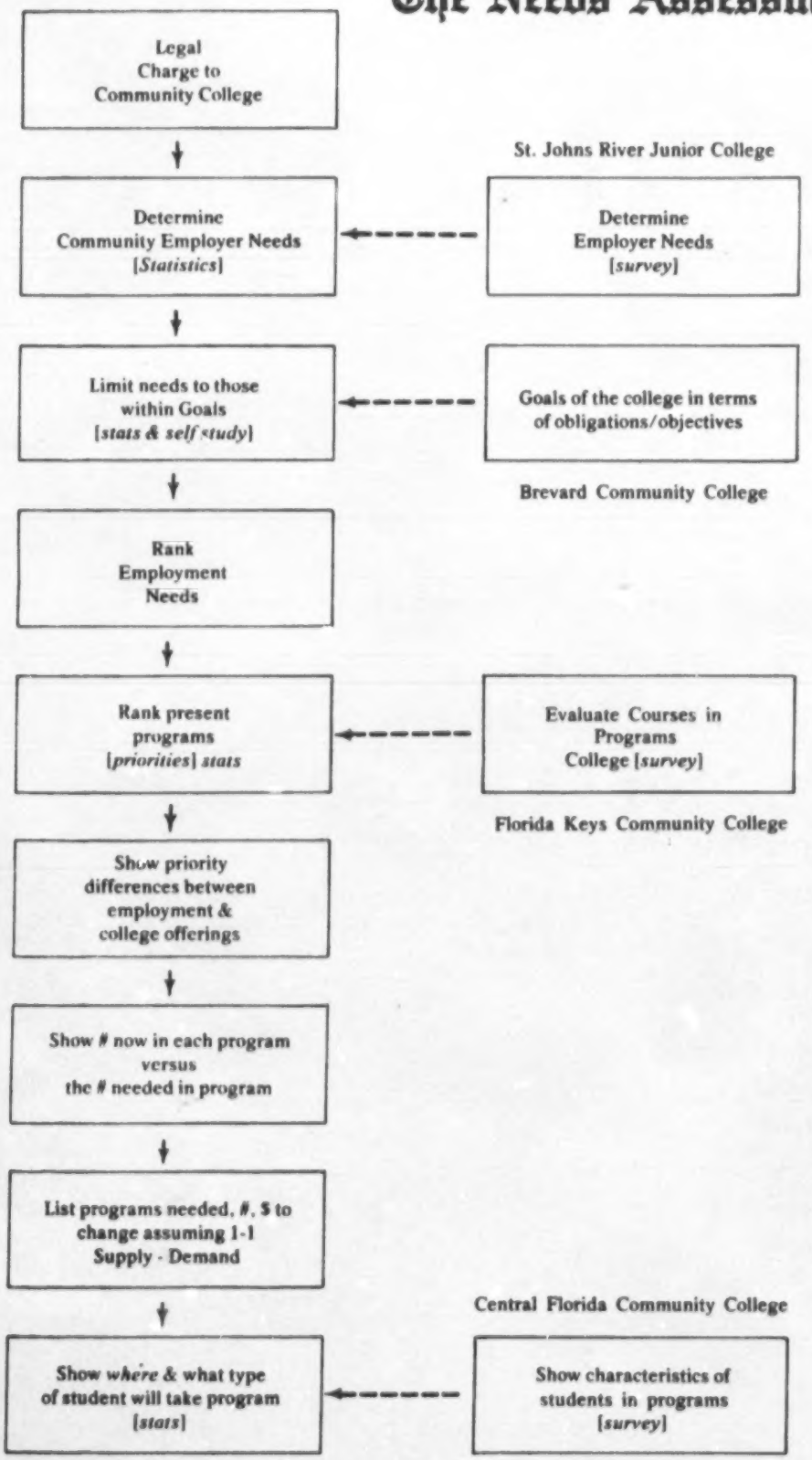
Figure 1 shows the logical flow or process used in the model. The flowchart includes blocks which show the modules developed individually by each of the colleges as subsystems in the Needs Assessment Model.

The model was developed for the primary area of educational need--vocational preparation or career training.

As listed at the bottom of the flowchart, there are other educational need categories to be addressed, each requiring unique data sources and separate processing procedure in order to measure or assess the difference between "what is" and "what should be." That is to say, needs must be categorized into unique groups as a preliminary step--among them general education, adult education, community interest programs, vocational technical programs, social-cultural programs, and college transfer programs. Then each category needs to be analyzed through a needs assessment procedure.

FIGURE 1

The Needs Assessment Model Process


Legal Charge to Community College
St. Johns River Junior College
Determine Community Employer Needs [Statistics]
Determine Employer Needs [survey]
Limit needs to those within Goals [stats & self study]
Goals of the college in terms of obligations/objectives
Brevard Community College
Rank Employment Needs
Rank present programs [priorities] stats
Evaluate Courses in Programs College [survey]
Florida Keys Community College
Show priority differences between employment & college offerings
Show # now in each program versus the # needed in program
List programs needed, #, $ to change assuming 1-1 Supply - Demand
Central Florida Community College
Show where & what type of student will take program [stats]
Show characteristics of students in programs [survey]

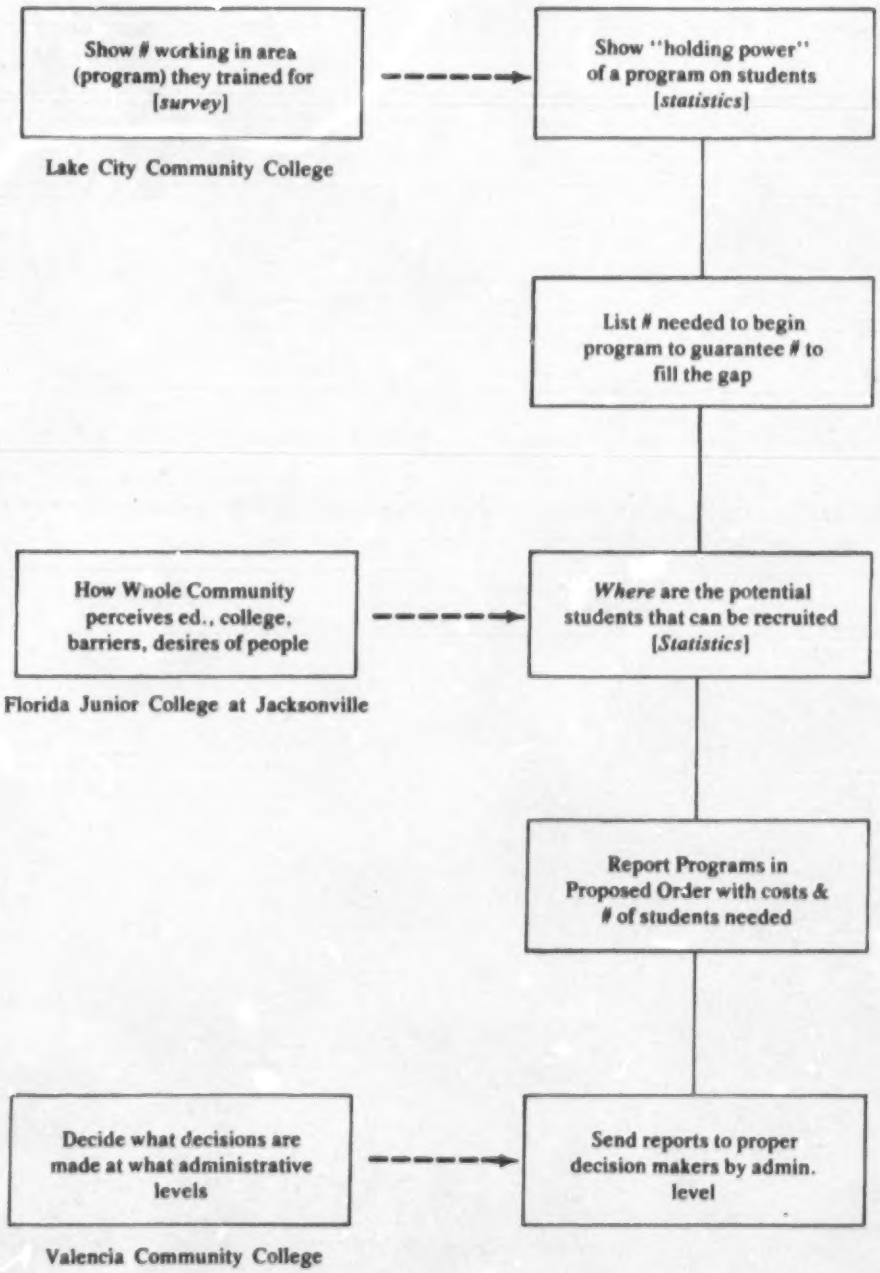
What Is The Needs Assessment Model?

The objective of the Needs Assessment Project has been to develop a process which will enable community colleges to (1) determine the present job market for service areas, (2) from these data, project future occupational needs, (3) establish priorities for these needs, and (4) relate these priorities specifically to educational programs and make planning decisions accordingly.

This year the Project has been primarily concerned with figures gathered from the Florida State Employment Service, as well as occupational statistics available on a national and regional basis. These statistics have been manipulated in various ways with the goal of obtaining the best possible picture of present ocupational needs in member communities. From this

FIGURE 1 (Continued)

And How The Modules Inter-Relate


Show # working in area (program) they trained for [survey]
Show "holding power" of a program on students [statistics]
Lake City Community College
List # needed to begin program to guarantee # to fill the gap
How Whole Community perceives ed., college, barriers, desires of people
Where are the potential students that can be recruited [Statistics]
Florida Junior College at Jacksonville
Report Programs in Proposed Order with costs & # of students needed
Decide what decisions are made at what administrative levels
Send reports to proper decision makers by admin. level
Valencia Community College

picture it is planned to project the needs of these communities over the next several years. These statistical manipulations and the conceptual processes underlying them constitute the Needs Assessment Model.

Through the use of this model, colleges can now answer such questions as: What will the future job needs of user areas be? Which of these needs can curriculum planning remedy? Which of these needs represent problems for the community as a whole but are not suitable for training programs in community colleges?

The Needs Assessment Model is not, however, one monolithic set of statistical procedures, but is a process which is constantly being refined and updated to meet present and future needs of participating colleges.

The Model is now being expanded to assess the needs in the areas of:

1. College transfer programs.
2. Community interest programs and courses.
3. Social-Cultural programs.
4. General and Adult education programs.

There were nine phases in the development of the model for assessing vocational or career program needs.

1. General model design.
2. Data collection and screening of available information.
3. Processing and synthesis of data collected.
4. Development of the detail model procedure based on findings.
5. Selection of a prototype; pilot and test the model.
6. Develop tables of most relevant data for curriculum decisions, evaluating and refining the model.
7. Implement the model procedure in all Consortium colleges.
8. Provide continuous data on assessed needs for planning.
9. Continue to evaluate and refine the needs assessment model.

The major data source determined as the key to job needs assessment, or career training needs, is the State job bank of information on job openings. The data items to be studied were occupational clusters, education and experience requirements, the amount of time delays between job openings and when they are filled, and the salary range for occupational clusters.

The goal is to make the model a statewide system useful to educators, manpower specialists, and any planner concerned with the supply of trained persons or demand for training services. A comprehensive job needs assessment process can be an effective instrument of change within a State college, and community. An information system of occupational needs will save millions in unnecessary manpower surveys, while allowing for consistency in planning year after year for more successful employment to each worker.

Need To Be Fulfilled

The assessment of needs in urban, rural, or small county areas is difficult to derive. Assessments have been left aggregated at the national and state levels, with an occasional needs survey for larger metropolitan areas. What studies do exist use national and state aggregates breaking them down to smaller regions and communities, with very little research done to aggregate upwards from existing detailed data on local community areas.

Communities over the centuries have been left to evolve at their own rate of speed, with whatever imbalances develop; depleting whatever resources are available by anyone who has the whim and support to do so; letting shortages and gaps lay dormant or expand while surpluses also expand. When research efforts have resulted with worthwhile techniques to determine occupational needs, often the material is shelved or used as case studies categorized as "academic" rather than implemented or developed further for practical application by planners.

It is high time that a technique capable of presenting a total view of manpower needs--that at the same time will be logical and straightforward for local planners to use--be developed. The data are available for assessing needs at the local level, it should be used to aggregate to the state and national level, rather than disaggregating regional, state, or national data to the local level.

The Job Bank does provide the detailed data on local jobs needs for local planning, and can be aggregated to the state and national level.

Project Description

The educational institutions involved in this study were concerned with offering the most relevant programs within resource limitations. Thus, they wanted a consistent, dependable method for recognizing the changing patterns and needs of the potential students so that workable plans and worthwhile educational programs could be implemented. What we offer students today in educational programs can shape the future of tomorrow's economic balance in the communities.

The purpose of the Needs Assessment Project, therefore, that the Central Florida Community Colleges' Consortium embarked upon, was to provide a comprehensive and systematic approach to the collection, processing, analysis,and dissemination of the information for better knowledge about the community for which educational decisions are being made.

Certain goals in the development of the model were paramount:

1. Utilize information that can be obtained on a cycle, building a time series, and allowing for historical trends to build a forecasting pattern.

2. Utilize computerized data if possible,and if the management information system is reliable and valid.

3. Aim for compatible data across communities or county lines, so that comparisons can be made and so that data can be aggregated for multi-community assessment.

4. Utilize information that will show what is presently happening, as well as builds historical records for trending occupational growth--which also shows where occupations are not distributing into the pattern of growth,for corrective action, if desired.

5. If multi-data sources provide the same information and meet the above criteria, then select the source(s) that shows the most long-range potential and validity, and which broadens the model's scope as a useful tool at the State and National levels.

Final Strategy

Although various other data are utilized to refine and enhance the basic model, employer needs for new personnel provide the most relevant data from

a centralized data bank which functions as a record keeper for the Employment Security Agency. These data include all job openings that were listed by local offices. As action is taken on an employer's job opening, the record is updated to show whether or not the job was filled or cancelled after a specified period of time. Over 800 positions of information are recorded per each job request to categorize the job as to its type, salary range, experience required, special skills desired, industry in which the job is located, where in the city or town the job is located, whether the job is part-time or full-time, etc.

The job orders analysis will not provide data on all needs in a given area, but it will definitely give the magnitude and proper direction in which job needs are moving. It is the best source available for comparing on a continuous basis one occupational group to another, and how openings are distributing into the industries.

Specific variables needed to produce the required reports important to job needs analysis are:

1. The 2-digit Dictionary of Occupational Titles codes (DOT) which categorizes approximately 100 occupational groups. A better set may be derived and used if it becomes obvious that a different occupational cluster system makes the data more useful.

2. The 2-digit Standard Industrial Classification codes (SIC) used in the following grouping:

SIC	INDUSTRY
01-09	Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries
10-14	Mining
15-17	Contract Construction
19-39	Manufacturing
40-49	Transportation, Communications, Utilities
50-59	Wholesale and Retail Trade
60-67	Finance, Insurance, Real Estate
70-89	Service
91-97	Federal, State, and Local Governments

3. Zip codes or Group Bank to cluster by County. Analysis will be performed to determine how to obtain County job information with the least amount of error.

4. Number of jobs available or openings by occupation.

5. Number of jobs filled or persons placed by occupation.

6. Requirements of employers for the person wanted to fill the job in experience.

7. The minimum salary which the employer is willing to pay the person hired.

Research studies funded at the national level to inform the U.S. Department of Labor as to the usefulness of the Job Orders system continue to show each year increases in the use of the computerized system and use of the employment service local offices by employers. At present, however, there is still little use made of the data for planning purposes. The data are among our most valuable research tools.

End Product to be Produced

It is important to employers and job seekers to know characteristics of the jobs available, jobs filled or left unfilled, and the salary range employers are willing to pay for the services. Table 1 shows the layout of one of the reports.

Table 1: Job Opening Information by Occupation

OCCUPATION	Total # of Job Openings	# of Jobs Filled	#Filled >$2.50	Net Job Openings	Net Jobs >$2.50
19 Misc. Prof., Tech and Mgr.	215	71	43	144	103
29 Misc. Merchan.,etc.	256	109	51	147	25

The following two tables show the relationship of occupations to major industry divisions. Table 2 shows the number of reported openings by occupation within industry groups while Table 3 shows the number of openings filled.

Table 2: Openings by Occupation Within Industry

	INDUSTRY CODE									
Occupation	00-09	10-14	15-17	19-39	40-49	50-59	60-67	70-89	91-93	Total
21 Computing & Acctg.	18	1	46	91	38	377	183	332	81	1167
81 Welding	5	11	39	72	4	3	0	13	1	148
86 Construction	28	2	683	52	5	41	21	120	230	1182
etc.										

Table 3: Filled by Occupation Within Industry

	INDUSTRY CODE									
Occupation Title	00-09	10-14	15-17	19-39	40-49	50-59	60-67	70-89	91-93	Total
21 Computing & Acctg.	5	0	30	35	24	70	96	105	50	396
81 Welding	5	10	15	30	4	3	0	10	1	78
86 Construction	21	2	426	41	4	31	11	101	133	770
etc.										

Table 4 shows the ratio of openings filled to total openings by occupation within industries.

Table 4: Ratio of Openings Filled to Total Openings by Occupation Within Industry

	INDUSTRY CODE																					
	00-09		10-14		15-17		19-39		40-49		50-59		60-67		70-89		91-97		Total	
Occupation	R	F	R	F	R	F	R	F	R	F	R	F	R	F	R	F	R	F	R	F
21 Computing & Acctg.	18	28%																	1167	25%
81 Welding	5	100%						etc.											148	86%
86 Construction	28	75%																	1182	78%
etc.																			etc.	

*R - Received
F - Filled in %

Also important to educational planners for vocational training and to job seekers is the amount of experience employers are seeking from workers. Table 5 shows the print-out layout and the format used to show the information.

Table 5: Average Experience by Occupation

Occupation	Average Experience Required, in Months	Positions Open
07: Medicine and Health	11.535	131
21: Computing and Accounting	13.066	136
etc.		

The salary is a very important indicator as to the priority of needs because it indicates whether or not the supply is forcing salaries up or down as we look at the data month by month. Salary information can give us indications as to occupational shortages when compared with other data. It can also help education planners to decide whether or not the salary merits opening a program to train workers.

Table 6: Average Minimum Salary by Occupation

Occupation	Average Minimum Salary Per Hour	Positions Open
20 Steno., Typing	2.36	198
33 Cosmetology & Barb.	2.40	30
81 Welding	3.82	228
Etc.		

Entry level experience is very important for knowing what employers are seeking and what training can be given to offset experience requirement The number of entry level openings will also be useful when compared with salary information to see how many entry level jobs become available on a monthly basis as well as the number of entry level openings that will pay more than $2.50 per hour.

Table 7: Entry Level Experience Where Pay is $2.50 Per Hour by Occupation

Occupation	Entry Level Experience # of Openings	Openings $2.50 With Entry Level
20 Steno., Typing	159	76
33 Cosmetology & Barb.	30	7
81 Welding	228	153
Etc.		

The Analysis Stage

A sample of the various types of tables that can be produced were shown in the prior section. It is no small task to keep the tables of data updated, although now that the computer programs are completely tested and debugged the maintenance and continual refinement of the model is relatively straight-forward and quickly done.

However, the key in terms of educational decision-making, or for that matter, any area of planning concerned with the future of manpower, is the analysis stage. The tables must be related to the organization. The data must be translated into understandable terms for the planning decisions. It is one thing to know what the ten (10) top priority job areas are; but how they relate to the present efforts and training in a given institution must also be studied. Some of the most useful tables in reaching decisions about curriculum planning are shown in the following illustrations.

Table 8: A Composite Weighted View to Prioritize Job Needs--Synthesizing Salary Range, Education, Experience Desired, and Time Jobs Remain Open

OCCUPATION	# Unfilled Jobs	Pricrity Weight on Scale 30 to 1
Auto Mechanics	54	29.331
Welding	143	27.662
Horticulture & Plant Farming	36	26.113
Computer Services	115	23.002
Mid-Management	81	22.665
etc.		

The above table helps to aggregate or simulate the factors selected as major factors in measuring job needs, at a glance and in priority--not by occupation code, but by importance based on the scale.

Table 9 requires considerable analysis, as well as coordination with the educational organization since oftentimes the narrative describing what transpires within a curriculum program is not consistent with what actually happens. This table provides an example of how curriculum programs are matched or related with occupational classifications.

Table 9: Curriculum Programs Related to Job Needs

CURRICULUM PROGRAMS		OCCUPATION		# Students	# Jobs
Code	Title	Code(s)	Title(s)	Presently Enrolled	Available
01.0700	Forestry	62	Forestry	36	20
14.0100	Acctg.	21	Comp.& Acctg.	131	156
07.0000	Health	07	Med. & Health	94	35
14.0700	Steno,Clerical	20 26	Steno & Sec. Clerical & Typing	65	113
	etc.				

It is also important to show what occupation clusters do not presently have curriculum programs offered to meet those needs -- or those job groups that are"unmatched" or "unrelated" to the present programs, as well as what programs are being taught that do not show in the job clusters as needs in the community assessed. Then, if a course is being offered,or a program, that serves a larger service area than the target group generally being assessed in the model, data must be collected from the relevant target area in order to measure the amount of change in "need". For example, a health program could be taught at a given community college for all related health needs for the State, rather than for the counties or communities generally serviced in the other curriculum programs, in which case the related health needs must be assessed for the State.

There are two other forms of analysis important in the model: The cost/benefit in terms of the college and the cost/benefit in terms of the community;

and how the present educational needs assessment relates to the future--what does the career situation look like for tomorrow. Table 10 shows one type of table that can be developed for a cost/benefit analysis in terms of the community, based on the calculation of present enrollment times the present average salary/hour, and number of net jobs (or unfilled jobs, times the salary/hour.

Table 10: Occupational Needs and Dollar Impact as Indicated by Difference Between Enrollment and Net Jobs

Curr. Prog. - Occ. Code	Average Salary	Present Enrollment	Per Hour Economic Impact At Present	# of Net Jobs > 2.50	Per Hr. Economic Impact If Needs Met

Table 11 provides the final sample of an analytical table. This table must be updated at given intervals in order to keep projections in line with changing assumptions and changing job patterns as the economy shifts. Various options can be utilized to develop tables to forecast future educational needs, and since the future always has alternatives, the forecasts should also consider the alternatives, thus implying a range to a projected job need--based on economic-social constraints.

Table 11: Projected Occupational Needs Through 1980

Job Title	Present Unfilled Openings	Next Year's Openings	Unfilled Openings Through 1980
Welding	143	113	536
Food Services	156	216	1048
Mid-Mgt.	81	68	367
etc.			

Conclusion

The Needs Assessment Model is a planning tool that can provide data never before available to local planners, as well as to districts, regions, and states. The procedures of the job analysis model will be useful for statewide planning through relatively straight-forward steps. The techniques are innovative, direct, inexpensive, and will require minimal amounts of time by research analysts after the model has been completed and validated.

The model focuses on the gleaning of currently collected data from the best sources available within each community. The nucleus of the model develops around a single source -- that of Job Bank data -- with the underlying principle that a single source will be more accepted and adopted into planning offices. As the model is updated and its efficacy is evaluated, provisions can readily be made for the addition of recommended subsystems to the basic plan, if sufficient personnel within user organizations are assigned to the planning function. The model can be used to build a logical stepping-stone procedure; it is believed that the smallest educational institution or manpower planning office could use the model to project the local community's needs.

Useful data result from this model process that focus on the training needs of the community from an employment perspective. Questions can be answered such as: What are the job needs and their associated training requirements? Do we want this trend we see occurring to continue within our job mix? Are there major shortages and gaps among jobs in our communities? Are our educational programs meeting the needs for special skills? What will the economic balance be in our community if this trend continues?

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The assessment of community needs must be an integral part of Statewide planning and local community planning. If we do not, then imbalances will continue, our children in small communities will be left with no choice except to commute to the big city for work or migrate completely out of the area, the stabilizing balances within the community will shift and many rural areas will become ghost towns, inner cities will deteriorate with more push into the suburbs since needs cannot be met within the hub, and a restlessness will impact the community as surplus workers move into unemployment and workers in shortage categories find no time for leisure.

There is growing recognition that the extremely rapid pace of social and technological change means that the world of tomorrow in which today's students will be working is going to be vastly different from the world of yesterday that schools and colleges have traditionally stressed. And why are students in our educational institutions? The answer that seems relevant is: To prepare themselves for the future. And how do we prepare them for the future? By planning curriculum based on future community needs.

The key is that what we do and what we plan today determines what will happen tomorrow. We can either build imbalances through our training programs, creating over-supplies here and shortages there, or build balance through our program options. Thus, the model process is developed with the aim of reducing imbalances between manpower required and labor market supply, enhancing the earning power of a person through training options, and providing data on changing needs in the community.

It is the hope that you have gained sufficient knowledge about the procedures involved in Needs Assessment so that your organization can benefit from the Florida pilot model.